

How to Abort an Abduction Attempt

<http://www.wikihow.com/Survive-an-Abduction-or-Hostage-Situation>

Introduction

Kidnappings occur all over the world and for all sorts of reasons. From family members to sexual predators to ransom seekers, what is immediately clear is that there is no *typical* abduction, and as more and more people travel throughout the world, the oft-quoted advice to always fight your would-be abductor requires some reconsideration. While on rare occasions, it's best to [cooperate](#), the situation may call for immediate escape, and you need to think fast and act decisively. Here's how.

Steps



1.

Play it safe. Take preventative safety precautions. If you're walking in a public place, always be aware of who's around. Be attentive (rather than drowning yourself out with headphones). Make it a habit to spot an escape route every time you enter a new environment. Avoid dark alley ways and parking lots, and/or get an escort. Lock your windows and doors at night. Carry a cell phone and some safety devices (such as a loud horn on your key chain). If you are traveling abroad, carry a local paper or magazine in the local language. Arrange for taxis through your hotel desk. Read travel precautions on the US State Department site (or through your travel agent.)

- **Follow your gut instinct** If you get a bad vibe from someone, listen to your gut feeling no matter how irrational. Ducking into a store, changing your route, and staying in the presence of others are all good examples of how you can avoid kidnapping by listening to your instincts.

2. **Form a plan.** The would-be abductor initially gains the upper hand on his victim because he has the element of surprise in his favor. You can prepare yourself by assessing your situation before abduction occurs. What kind of abduction are you most likely to encounter? What will you do if someone attempts to kidnap you? Rehearse possible scenarios in your mind, and you'll be ready to act instantly should you actually be attacked.
3. **Be prepared to resist, by carrying mace (pepper spray), a steel extendable baton, or, where legal, a handgun.** One of the most consistent results of outcome studies on assaults and abductions is that resisting with a firearm is the response least likely to get you injured or killed. Unless you are a trained hand-to-hand fighter, or the assault is an attempted rape and there are people nearby, unarmed resistance raises your odds of being killed above those from surrendering or armed resistance. Always carry where it is legal, and if you believe you are at high risk consider carrying even where it is illegal. Being jailed on a firearms-possession charge is unpleasant, but a better outcome than being raped or killed.
 - **If there are multiple armed attackers** who, seeking ransom, attempt to abduct you in an isolated or hostile place where there is realistically little to no chance of escape, you should be cooperative from the get-go. This is frequently the case in parts of South America, for example, where well-organized kidnappers abduct businessmen for profit. About 95% of people abducted in this manner are released alive, and the chance of being killed is highest in the first few minutes of the abduction, when something goes wrong — usually when the victim tries to escape or fight.
 - **If the would-be abductor is unarmed**, if the attempt is sexually motivated, and if you are in the vicinity of other people and can quickly get help, you should fight or do anything you possibly can to escape the attacker. This is the case in most abduction attacks in the U.S. and other developed countries, and it's also usually the case if the intended victim is a woman or child.



4.

Run away. If you've made the quick decision to get away, try to get to a safe public place and continue to scream for help. Don't look back, and don't stop until you've reached safety. What qualifies as safety depends on the circumstances. The presence of police officers is almost always sufficient, as is being in a crowd of people (though these situations are only safe if you make sure the police or people in the crowd know what's happening). If you're a foreign national in a hostile

country, however, you may not actually be safe until you reach a friendly military patrol or embassy.

5. **Put something between you and the attacker.** You may not be able to outrun your attacker, but if you can put something — a busy street, a group of people, or even a car (which you can run around as he tries to pursue you) — between you and him, you may be able to delay him enough to get away or to cause him to give up.



6. **Make a scene.** Scream, yell, run into bystanders, blow a whistle, and bring as much attention as possible to yourself and your attacker. This technique is especially successful in or near public places, where the abductor hopes to remain inconspicuous lest others intervene or call police. For children, who are relatively less able to fight or flee a would-be abductor, involving others is sometimes the only chance of escape. Do not simply scream in terror or yell "help," as people are apt to ignore this plea. You should yell out the circumstances and a description of the attacker if at all possible: "A man with a knife is chasing me! He's wearing a blue sweatshirt and torn jeans!" (Children should be taught to yell "I'm being kidnapped! I don't know this person!" etc.) This should have the effect of deterring your attacker, or at least convincing bystanders that your plight is real and not a joke/game/quarrel/, or at the very least, of leaving behind a reliable description for the police to work from if you are unable to evade capture.
7. **Grab on to people and or objects.** Sadly, people are often hesitant to intervene in an abduction. Get someone's attention and *make* them intervene by grabbing them and holding on while screaming and explaining the situation. The bystander is now involved in the fight against the abductor, which shifts the odds in your favor considerably, especially if you're a woman or child. If there are no people around to grab, hold on to a large object, such as a lamp post, parking meter, or your bicycle. If you can't get away from an abductor, you at least want to prevent him from taking you away against your will.

8. **Fight as if your life depended on it.** Fight tooth and nail to prevent the abductor from getting you under his control. While everyone should take a self-defense course, you don't usually need specialized knowledge to ward off an attack. Nor do you need to "win" a fight with your attacker: fighting should usually be used just to get out of the grip of an attacker or to enable you to get a head start running away. If your attacker is a sexual predator and you think your chances of escaping are slim, still put up a fight the entire time. Rapists look for easy targets, not someone who is going to struggle and flail. If you fight hard enough, they may decide you are not a good target and give up.
 - **Fight dirty.** Do whatever you need to get away: this isn't a boxing match. Pick up and wield any heavy object that is close at hand. If you have mace, pepper spray, or a stun gun, use it. If an abductor grabs hold of you, don't be afraid or ashamed to make use your teeth. The seconds you need to escape can be achieved by stunning him with an extreme action like biting off part of an ear, finger, or nose.
 - **Aim for sensitive spots.** Poke the abductor in the eyes; hit or kick him the groin, nose, throat, or kidneys; scrape your foot hard against his shin. Make your strikes count but don't stand and fight, run when you break free.
 - **Do the windmill.** When the abductor grabs you or attempts to grab you, swing your arms wildly. This will make it difficult for him to maintain a hold on you.
9. **Call 911.** If you have a cell phone, dial the emergency dispatch number for your country. If you can put some distance between you and your attacker, or if you can delay him (by locking yourself in a room, for example), police may reach you in time to capture or at least deter him. If, however, you are immediately subdued, try to conceal your cell phone, and then call police when your captor isn't looking. If you don't have a cell phone, use any phone available. If you can use a payphone—you won't have to deposit money to call 911—you may be able to hold onto it. If the would-be abductor cannot quickly remove you from the scene, he may flee, knowing that police are on the way. If you've escaped the attacker, run to a nearby house or business, let them know what happened and have them call 911; this 1) puts you in a safe place; 2) summons police and 3) creates witnesses.
10. **Lie about advantages you may have.** You should do *anything* to make the attacker *think* he/she is as unsafe as possible. This means *lying* about advantages you don't have.
 - "My dad is the chief of police. You don't want to do this."
 - "I have anhydrous diabetic chronic pneumonia [made-up disease]. I have to take my medication every three hours, or I'll die. If you take me, you're looking at murder charges, no matter what."
 - "There's a police station two blocks away. Why are you doing this here?"
 - It is best to call the police, but if for some reason you cannot (lost cell phone, etc.), you should always tell an attacker that police are on the way.

"I dialed the panic button from my cell phone, police are on the way. Just run now, and you'll be safe."

11. [Deal with an abduction](#). If your efforts to thwart the abduction are unsuccessful, there are a number of things you can do to help you survive your ordeal. Read the related wikiHow for more details.

Other Tips

- Even if the attacker has a gun, you should seriously consider running. In abductions motivated by ransom or sexual predation, the abductor doesn't want you dead, at least not before he or she has been able to remove you from the initial location. The would-be abductor may not shoot at you at all, especially if other people are nearby, and even if he does, if you can put a little distance between you and him, the chances of him hitting you, a moving target, aren't very good unless he's a trained marksman. The probability is even lower that he will seriously wound you and then take the time to continue the abduction. Run in a zig-zag motion. This makes it harder for your attacker to get a shot off than if you run in a straight line.
- The most important thing to do if someone is trying to force you into a vehicle is to fight at all costs. If your attacker is able to get you inside, your chance of escape or survival is dramatically reduced. Use your arms and legs to jam yourself in the car's doorway if someone is trying to push you into the car. If possible, try to keep your head outside and above the car and scream. This makes it harder to push you in, and could alert passersby that something is wrong. If you're forced into a vehicle, open the door and get out if you can. If you can't get out of the vehicle, try to jam something into the ignition cylinder before the abductor inserts the key into the ignition, or pull the key out of the ignition, and throw them out the window or and jam something in. A button off your clothes, a piece of metal, a stick, or the bubble gum in your mouth can all effectively prevent the abductor from reinserting the key and starting the vehicle.
- If you're placed in a trunk, try to [escape](#). If you can't get out, rip out or kick through the panel leading to the brake lights, and kick the lights out. You can then stick your arm out and alert motorists that you are inside. If you can't push the lights out, at least disconnect the wires so police are more likely to pull the car over. In addition, yell for help and pound on the trunk lid whenever the vehicle stops or is traveling slowly.
- Avoid being restrained. Once you are restrained, with handcuffs, tape, or rope, for example, there is little chance for escape. You must act quickly to prevent being restrained. If you are going to fight or flee, do it immediately. You may not get a second chance.
- Be observant. Try to remember as many details about your attacker as possible so you can relay the information to police.
- If you are in a region where the predominant language is not your own, make sure to learn key phrases in the local language that might aid you in your escape or

evasion attempts (such as the expressions cited elsewhere on this page). People are more sympathetic to those with whom they have a connection and if you are not understood, you cannot be helped!

Final Warnings

- Keep in mind that if you are recaptured after an initial escape attempt, you will very likely not get another chance to escape. Make your escape count.
- Your attacker will probably be angry when you fight back, especially if you cause him injury. While some would-be abductors will run away or give up when you fight back, many will pursue you. Do not hold back when attempting to injure your attacker — be as vicious and forceful as possible. It is imperative that you escape once you stun or incapacitate the abductor, because if you are recaptured he will take his anger out on you.